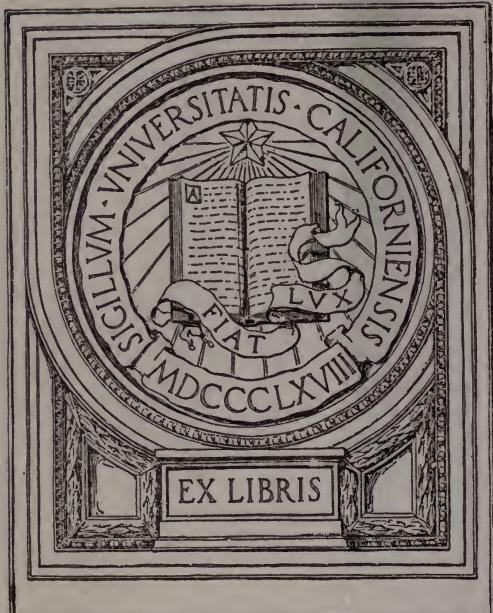


E

78

.C15W5
x



BANCROFT LIBRARY

GAYLORD BROS.
Markers
SYRACUSE, N.Y.
PAT. JAN. 21, 1908

REPORT

OF

CHAS. A. WETMORE,

SPECIAL U. S. COMMISSIONER

OF

MISSION INDIANS

OF

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

E

78
G15W5

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE,
1875.

6
X
The Bancroft Library

No. 11165

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 9, 1875.

SIR: I have the honor to report concerning the condition and necessities of the Mission Indians of Southern California, as follows:

In accordance with instructions received, I have visited those portions of California in which these Indians live; have observed their present mode of life as compared with the past; have investigated carefully conflicts which have arisen between them and the whites respecting settlements on the public lands, and on private land-grants; have noted the results of these conflicts, together with the effect of white settlements upon their morals; have endeavored to ascertain the causes of all general conflicts with the whites, and of their degrading habits; have consulted white citizens whose contact in life with these Indians renders their experience valuable in attempting to devise plans for the benefit of the Indians, as well as also of the whites, whose interests and home-life are affected by the presence and habits of the Indians; and have, I trust, devised some plans by which, if approved and carried into effect, both the Indian and the white communities will be materially advanced, morally and physically, in their several and relative conditions.

To arrive at a true understanding of the character of these Indians, their present condition and wants, will require at least a brief review of their past history. This history has been to me, not only during several years of my life in Southern California, but also since I have been compelled, through my relations with the press, to investigate the "Indian question," full of interest and instruction, with power to fascinate, when in romantic mood, and with food for serious thought, shedding light upon cloudy discussions concerning an important branch of government.

1. *The era of missionary establishments.*—A little more than one hundred years ago the Indians of California (Alta California) were living in aboriginal condition. No encroachments had yet been made upon their rights or savage liberties. Farther south, on the peninsula of Lower California, (Baja California,) Jesuit missions had been established in a few places, but with what success we are not informed. They were broken up before the period of which this paragraph treats. At that time was the dawn of civilized life upon the present State of California, the beginning of its written history.

The Jesuit missionaries having been expelled from Lower California by order of the King of Spain, Father Junipero Serra, of the order of St. Francis, from the college of San Fernando, Mexico, was placed in command of the brig San Antonio, and invested with full authority to explore the coast to the north, or what was then known as Nueve California, and to establish missions among the native Indian population. A detailed account of the explorations, thrilling adventures, patient devotion, and successful works of the Franciscan fathers, would be full of interest to any person desiring to study the mode by which they obtained

control of the Indian tribes and held them with such a powerful and peaceful sway. Their work extended through such a long period of years that an opportunity is afforded, through the diaries and reports of the missionaries, to note the slowly, yet surely, changing condition of the Indians under their charge. An exhaustive review of their writings, which may be found in various places and might be collated by some industrious writer, would reveal the secrets of their success in managing, civilizing, and pacificating Indians, most of such success being due to the wisdom of their policy in governing them.

On the 16th of July, 1769, more than a century ago, the first mission was established in Alta California at Cosoy, as the Indians there called the present site of the city of San Diego. A few years later it was removed to a point five miles from the bay of San Diego and established permanently at Nipaquay, now only known as the Mission Valley. Twenty-one missions were established within the present limits of the State of California and many others further south, in Lower California.

The following is a list of those established in Southern California, with dates of foundation :

San Diego, July 16, 1769.
 San Luis Rey de Francia, June 13, 1798.
 San Juan Capistrano, November 1, 1776.
 San Gabriel, September 8, 1771.
 San Fernando Rey, September 8, 1797.
 San Buenaventura, March 31, 1782.
 Santa Barbara, December 4, 1782.
 Santa Ynez, September 17, 1804.
 La Purissima Concepcion, December 8, 1787.

These names are given with reference to relative geographical position going north from San Diego. None of the mission establishments were situated more than thirty miles from the Pacific coast. Most of them were in the principal and most fertile valleys near the ocean. The most northerly one was San Francisco de Solano, (now Sonoma,) near San Francisco, to the north of the bay.

The missionaries were performing a semi-religious, semi-political work, aided by the authority and power of Spain. They gradually assumed control of the entire coast. The Indians were, by degrees, brought under subjection, and gathered in towns in the vicinity of the missions, where they were instructed in a rude system of agriculture, and in a few of the arts necessary to the lowest grades of civilized life. Vast areas of the most fertile and best grazing lands were informally dedicated to the use of the missions, and held as common property by the neophytes under the direction and *trusteeship* of the missionaries. It was the aim of the Spanish government to construct out of this system permanent churches or parishes, and ultimately to divide the common property in severalty among the neophyte Indians, as soon as sufficiently educated and civilized to constitute quiet and industrious self-supporting citizens. In this plan, and in its weakness, as subsequently shown, we see foreshadowed our present reservation-system. They had the advantage of a fixed policy on the part of the missionaries, and a fixed purpose, unaffected by change in office of the missionaries in charge; but their reservations of land, which were the foundation of their prosperity and progress, were subject to change, "restoration to the public domain" and sale by the Government, just as the reservations of to-day in the United States are the subject of executive order. It was true then, as it is undeniably now, that whenever a white desires to own anything, especially land, which is in possession

of an Indian, if it is within the power of Government to take away the possessions of the Indian and give them to the importunate white applicant, some pretext will be found to excuse the wrong, which is almost invariably perpetrated. The weakness in the system, then, was in the failure of the missionaries to secure vested rights for the Indians, who exchanged for such rights as they did receive the occupation and use of the whole country. Indians then, as now, received limited possessions under subjection as an exchange for their wide hunting-grounds, with a promise of protection, instruction, and the benefits of civilization; but those rights were not secured to them in fee, and the result was, as is now too often the case, when their lands became valuable and coveted by whites, they were speedily made paupers and vagrants to accommodate the white brother, whose laws had been promised for their protection and improvement. The Indians have been forced by superior power to trade their patrimony and their liberties for civilized bubbles, blown by the breath of political insincerity, trading by compulsion from bad to worse, until they have, as the Mission Indians in California, simply the right to beg. They beg bread of their white neighbors on whose lands they are trespassers, on the roads where they are vagrants, and in the jails, which are their only asylums. They have begged in vain for legal rights. Their right of petition to Congress has been ignored.

All this distress might have been avoided, if the Franciscan fathers had secured grants in fee of the mission-lands to be held as designed in trust for future allotment among the neophytes in civilization, and today there would have been flourishing villages and communities of valuable workers where now no trace of the Indian can be found, except the ruins of the old missions. Vagabondage has led to vice and demoralization, and these to extermination.

The era of the Franciscan missions continued from 1769 to 1833, and was a period of increasing prosperity in Alta California. The Indian missions became the hives of industry for the Pacific coast, and material wealth, as well as social order, crowned the devoted labors of the self-sacrificing, good men, who so steadfastly and wisely governed these communities of their own creation. Indicative of their prosperity are the following facts :

In 1826, the twenty-one missions were the homes of 24,611 neophytes, (now less than 5,000 of their descendants could be found.) They possessed 215,000 head of neat-cattle, 135,000 sheep, 16,000 horses, and harvested 75,000 bushels of grain—wheat, barley, and corn. And all this accomplished by a few wise men with a fixed policy.

But finally came the interruption and the beginning of a new era in their history. White men settled in the country which they had given up in exchange for mission life and privileges, and the inevitable conflict ensued.

In 1822, Mexican independence was declared and the sovereignty of the Californias fell under Mexican sway. The Mexican Congress, ruled by the exigencies of the times and the demands of politicians for money in the treasury, became the field for the Mexican lobby and the source of ill-gotten wealth for the Mexican schemers and “land-grabbers.” Private grants were rapidly issued for all the available valleys on the California coast to enterprising settlers, who, like our advance guard of settlers, had gone out into the wilderness to “develop the country.” The missions were soon surrounded by chivalric Mexicans and Spanish landlords, and the “cattle on a thousand hills” told prosperity to the vagabond ships which wandered that way to purchase hides and tallow;

but the weakness in the title of the mission-properties tempted the "land-grabbers"—history only tells the same story in other languages and other times—and a raid was made on the Mexican Congress. A bill to secularize the missions was passed and introduced for the ostensible purpose of carrying out the original design of the missions. Provision was made for the distribution of stock belonging to them, and for the sale of the mission-lands. The pretext, however, covered very thiuly a scheme to rob the Indians, and succeeded through the importunity of the lobby. The "law of secularization" was passed, the mission-lands were "restored to the public domain" and sold, not to the Indian, but to ranchers, and the stock, the flocks and herds—wealth for a principality, were "divided up," as was told me by one who was in California at that day and who remembers its wrong—*divided up among a few influential Spanish and Mexican families, and the prosperous self-sustaining Indians were made vagabonds and beggars without hope by act of law.*

The whole fabric of mission-influence was laid waste, and valleys which had been the property and homes for thousands of Indian families became the property of a few landlords. From that day the Indians began to degrade.

The era of the ranchero.—The destruction of mission-influence was followed by the scattering of the neophytes. These unfortunate beings, however, had been taught to labor in a pastoral life, and they easily fell into the occupations offered by the *rancheros*, who needed *vaqueros* and menials for their vast estates. This feudal life, into which the Indians were forced by circumstances, was less civilizing than the mission-life of the past. They were no longer instructed in useful arts, but were used and debauched at the pleasure of their masters. Still they lived in a comparatively happy state. The *ranchos* were like small realms, so large were their areas and so separated were the valleys by mountain-chains and ridges. Grants of land to single families varied generally from a Spanish league (4,437 acres) to eleven leagues—in a few instances even greater. Some of the original Indian villages were still and are to this day extant.

During the days of the *ranchero*, only so recently passed, each Indian became the owner of one or more horses, and in many cases of small herds of wild cattle. In a few instances they cultivated small patches of land, but this was rather the luxury than the necessity of their mode of life.

They lived almost at their own will, wherever they chose, in scattered villages, in valleys which were by common consent yielded up to their undisturbed possession, or they gathered in small communities upon grants of their employers and near their *ranchos*. These villages received the names of *rancherias*, and are still designated as such.

The indiscriminate grazing of stock over a country where fences were unknown gave equal opportunities to the Indians, who lived a careless, indolent life, only stirred into activity when they were in the saddle in pursuit of horses and wild cattle.

The era of squatters and farmers.—When gold was discovered in California, and the great rush of gold-seekers and traders filled the central portion of what is now the State of California, the flocks and herds of the Mexicans became the easy prey of the new-comers. The history of the wrongs perpetrated upon the *rancheros* was but a repetition of the wrongs suffered by the neophyte Indians, excepting that there was generally a weak consent on the part of the Mexicans, who were charmed by the vices of the Americans and lost their property in gam-

bling and profligacy. Their stock was soon stolen or traded for money lost in gambling, and soon, with few exceptions, their lands were the property of lawyers and money-lenders. Congress, after our Government had agreed by treaty to protect their rights, forced them all into lawsuits to establish their claims, and contingent fees and contestants-squatters rapidly exhausted their resources. The Mission Indians were literally annihilated during this invasion of "Americans," not by wars, but by vice and destitution.

Southern California, however, escaped the effects of the gold-fever and remained in the pastoral condition until about the fall of 1867, when a reaction took place in public sentiment, and California was sought for homes. This change was followed by settlers seeking pleasant homes in the southern counties, the balmiest portion of the State. "Cutting-up ranches" became a favorite business of the land-speculators, who purchased large grants and offered them for sale in small tracts to the farmers who poured into the country. The determination of boundaries of the Spanish and Mexican grants revealed to the settlers choice tracts of farming-lands, which were immediately occupied by them as squatters or pre-emptors on the public domain. In a short time every available piece of public land had an occupant, or claimant, and yet no provision made for the Indians, who swarmed throughout the country, a peaceable, useful class.

Soon came the "no-fence" laws, which provide by legislative enactment that stock-men must herd their stock and that farmers need not fence their lands to protect their crops. This soon extinguished the cattle interests. Sheep-men with their capital, and farmers with their crops, covered the country, and the Indians were without legal rights to their homes in their own land. Several ineffectual attempts to reserve public lands for Indians have been made, but each time defeated through the opposition and protests of white settlers, who would be thereby dispossessed.

The Indians have therefore lost all their traditional and customary rights, and are now everywhere trespassers in the land, vagrants, and troublesome neighbors to the whites. They still support themselves partially by cultivation of the soil; but they have no undisputed titles (except in one or two instances of special Mexican grants to Indians) to their homes. Generally throughout the country they gain a precarious living by wandering about in search of employment; they pick grapes, herd and wash sheep, chop wood, and do ordinary menial service. In the vicinity of towns the women give themselves up to prostitution, the ill-gotten gains of such a life supporting small villages or rancherias for a brief period, which is soon ended by disease and drunkenness.

The Mission Indians have become practically outcasts, notwithstanding their love for their homes and their willingness to work. Circumstances have made them public nuisances, and serious conflicts between them and the whites are constantly arising. Their condition is wretched in the extreme, and is each year becoming worse. Yet they are recognized by the people among whom they live as necessary workers in the field of developing the country. The fault is not with the people—the white settlers, who are only accepting the invitation of the laws to settle the country—but with the Government and Congress, which has failed to establish any practical mode of relief and means for the settlement of the Indians.

The white people suffer as well as the Indians, and, as I have found by actual observation and experience, are equally to be considered, if any

plan is to be devised for the settlement of these troubles. The outcast Indian becomes a vicious vagrant, and when his right to his little home on the public lands or on the private grant is questioned he becomes necessarily restless and quarrelsome, and his disposition to do wrong is encouraged. Prostitution, robbery, drunkenness, and murder have been common results in the last few years, where peace reigned before. Misery, disease, and death are the impending fate of these wretched creatures, if suffered longer to live the life of forced vagrancy.

The larger portion of the remnants of the Mission Indians within the State of California are confined to the county of San Diego, where they number about twenty-five hundred, besides nearly as many more who speak the Spanish language and are claimed as Roman Catholics. The numbers in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties are much less, and the farther north we go, we find that civilization for the whites has been an exterminating process to them. Farther east, in San Bernardino and San Diego Counties, there are other Indians, commonly known as Desert Indians, though of various tribes; but these did not come within my mission, they being wholly uncivilized and never under the complete control of the missions, though they are included within the pastoral duties of the priests of the Roman Catholic Church; to Father Ubach, of San Diego, and Father Verdaguer, of San Bernardino, being assigned these objects of missionary-work in San Diego and San Bernardino Counties, respectively. Accompanying this report, I have the honor to submit, for the information of the Department, a translation of a letter of Father Verdaguer to Bishop Amat, containing a report concerning the Desert Indians under his charge. Concerning these Desert Indians, Father Verdaguer writes, under date of August 25, 1873, in a manner that would be equally applicable to the Mission Indians. He says:

Yes, my lordship, it is sad to see how many of them make their living. Many of the men, as they have nothing to support themselves with, steal from the whites, and the women give themselves up to a life of prostitution, thus causing the demoralization and ruin of many whites, particularly of the young. What I say is a fact in all cases where the Indians are residing near the whites; a fact known and lamented by all good and honest people. The Government knows nothing of this, or it would use all possible means to prevent it. Let, then, all this be explained, and I am certain that the Government will listen to your lordship, will give to the Indians land enough to support themselves, and I will help your lordship establish schools for them. You will then be able to put a priest there who can easily manage and control them. I say I am certain of this, because by this plan the Government will not be compelled to expend one-half of what it now costs to keep up agencies and reservations. I was talking some time ago with one of the chiefs, and he said—"the whites complain to me that my men steal and do many other bad things. Well, I suppose they do; but who is more to blame than the whites themselves? They have stolen all our land from us, and we have nothing to support ourselves with. Let the Government secure to us the lands we now have, give some to those who have none; then my Indians will not steal; then I will be responsible for their acts, and I know the whites will have nothing to complain of."

They had no agent for several years, and they do not care much about it. The only men they have confidence in and desire to have with them is one of us—a Catholic priest. Would to God the Government would understand them, and put the Indians under our control. In a few years they would be an entirely different people; they would be able to support themselves; they would be good Christians, and even they could be made good citizens, and an honor to the Government.

It is useless for me in this report to give in detail the events of my tour among these Mission Indians, excepting so far as practical results of investigation are concerned. The Department is well informed, through the able report of Rev. John G. Ames, who visited Southern California as special commissioner last year, respecting the various distribution of the Indians throughout the country.

To illustrate some of the features of the present Mission Indian life,

I will quote a few passages from Charles Nordhoff's work on California, which fairly pictures some of the scenes which are common in Southern California. Mr. Nordhoff says :

About San Bernardino the farm-laborers are chiefly Indians. These people, of whom California has still several thousand, are a very useful class. They trim the vines, they plow, they do the household chores, they are shepherds—and trusty ones, too; vacqueros, and helpers generally. Mostly they live among the whites, and are thus humble, and, I judge, tolerably efficient ministers. Near San Bernardino, at any rate, I found that it was thought a great advantage for a man to "have Indians." At Temecula, twelve miles from the Laguna, we came upon an Indian settlement. You know already that these California Indians were, in the old times, gathered by pious priests into missions, where they were taught various useful industries, and the habit of labor. The old missions of California, now mere shells and ruins, show yet abundant evidence, in aqueducts, buildings, mills, reservoirs, and orange and olive orchards, of the skill and perseverance which the Franciscan friars brought to their task of civilizing the savages. "Those old fellows knew better how to manage the Indians than we do," said a rough old man who had walked with me through one of the old missions. They did a good work, for they found the Indians savages, and left them at least thoroughly tamed. The Indian of these southern counties is not a very respectable being, but he is of some use in the world; he works. It is true that he loves strong grape brandy; that he gets drunk; that he lives poorly; that he does not acquire money; and has even fewer notions of what we call comfort than his Spanish, half Spanish, Pike, and American neighbors. But he does not assassinate like the brutal Apache, and he has wants enough to make him labor for money. "I do not think my Indians would stay with me if they could not get drunk every Saturday night," said one who had just praised them as tolerably steady, and very useful and indispensable laborers.

The houses in which they live are mostly constructed of reeds and barley-straw, laced with long poles. You will see, if you enter, a single dark room, without windows or chimney; the fire planted at one end, and smoke escaping by the door; the stone on which grain is ground for *tortillas* near the door; the beds on the floor occupying half the space within; the women and children, and on Sunday the men, sitting around the fire waiting for the mess which is boiling in the pot, and which seemed to me to be generally mush, with no trace of meat; and without the door a few pots, pans, chickens, ducks, and dogs.

This house is planted, seemingly by chance, anywhere, without relation to anything except usually another house just like it. It has a flap-door made of an old apron or dress; but under the same roof you will generally find another room with a door, which is fastened. At first I thought this an apartment to let, but it is a store-house, and seems to be a sort of genteel sham, for every one into which I got a peep was empty or very nearly so. It had probably the same relation to the dignity and good standing of a family that a hermetically-sealed parlor has to a respectable countryman's house in New England.

If you can tell the difference between mere squalor and filth, you would see that these Indian houses and their inhabitants are not dirty. I think it likely that they learned cleanliness from the old Spanish Californians, who, it should be known, are an eminently cleanly people. At one of these houses, at a little distance from Temecula, I begged some hot water to prepare myself a little lunch, and while this was getting ready, took an inventory of the interior. It contained three children, a very old blind man, who bent over the fire and muttered to himself; three women, a girl, who was rubbing wheat on the tortilla-stone; a man sleeping on the bed, with his head covered and his feet sticking out near the fire; a baby tied into a wooden frame, in which the little ones are held, carried, and rocked; a fire; a few baskets, which are beautifully made by these people, and are water-tight; two saddles, an ox-yoke, a table, a sieve, two earthen oyas, in which water is kept cool in this country; a stone mortar and pestle, a gridiron, a coffee-pot, an ax, a sun-helmet, a pair of moccasins, carefully hung up, and evidently not often used, and a small picture of some saint. Outside stood two very respectable-looking wash-tubs, several pots, and for the rest, dogs.

Now here was an outfit, in fact, superior to that which I noted in several Pike shanties on the way. Here were preparations for living simply, but, after all, not uncleanly. Beyond this the Indian does not get. As you ride through the country you can tell at a distance the character of the inhabitants of a house you are approaching. If the house is of reeds and straw, the owner is an Indian; if it is of adobe, it is a Spaniard who lives there; if it is of frame, be sure it is an "American," as we of the old States proudly call ourselves. Often the wooden house is a mere box, smaller and less comfortable than the Indian's straw hut, but it is of wood.

The Indians in this part of the State are harmless. Being white and of the superior race, therefore, you have the privilege of entering any Indian's house, and you will be

kindly received, and if you want water out of his oya, or wish to cook your own dinner at his fire, you are welcome. You will prefer to camp out beside your own fire, in the open air, rather than take lodgings in his house.

* * * * *

These Temecula Indians are, I am told, descendants of those who formerly lived around the missions of San Luis Rey and San Diego. A thoughtful man cannot visit these and other old missions in this part of the State without feeling a deep respect for the good men who erected these now ruined churches; gathered around them communities of savages, and patiently taught them not only to worship in a Christian church, but also the habit of labor, the arts of agriculture, and some useful trades. They used the labor of the Indians to bring water in solidly-built aqueducts, often for a distance of miles, and to store it in tanks built of stone and cement, which still stand empty, and some with trees growing out of their depths. They introduced in this State the olive, the orange, the date-palm, the almond, as well as the cereals; and the olive-orchards at the San Diego mission, the earliest planted in the State, still bear heavy crops, and are a source of profit.

Moreover, when you have seen two or three of these old missions, it will dawn upon you that the good old padres had an excellent eye for country. What they sought, apparently, was a fine view, shelter from rude winds, good soil, and the vicinity of water; and so well did they secure their objects, that a mission-site is without exception, so far as I know, the very best spot for residence and agriculture in its district. At Santa Barbara, for instance, the white mission-buildings can be seen for a dozen miles in almost every direction; they are completely sheltered from rough winds, and the adjoining mission-lands are notoriously among the most fertile in the region. About San Diego, the country, which gets but little rain, has an arid look, until you drive into the Mission Valley; but even in this dry year, the view from the old mission church, now a sad ruin, is lovely. You have a broad expanse of green before you, with the beautiful grayish-green of the old olive-orchard for a foreground, and stately palms rearing their heads above the olive-trees.

The history of the missions of California has been compiled by a well-known Roman Catholic writer; but his work gives too little information concerning the character and objects of the old Dominican friars, to whose patience and perseverance in a noble work Southern California is to-day indebted for a valuable laboring force.

* * * * *

Perhaps they discussed for many, many weary hours their work, their aims, and their objects in those pleasant shady walks, bounded by olive-trees on one side and pomegranates on the other, traces of which you may still discover in some of the old mission-grounds. What a pleasant sunny nook of the world they occupied.

Investigation has shown to me that there are three classes of difficulties that must be provided against by judicious laws, if it is the intention of the Government and Congress to deal justly with the Indians and to protect American citizens from the evils which now surround them, which are the effects of contact with a vagabond class, whose vagabondage may be laid at the door of the Government.

In order to make these Indians occupy positions of usefulness in a white community without conflict of rights and to divest them of the character of public nuisances, it will be necessary—

First. To adjust and determine the rights of Indians on public lands, with due regard to the claims of white settlers, who have been invited by law to seek homes in the same localities.

Second. To settle the conflict between owners of private land-claims and Indians occupying the same.

Third. To prevent, as far as possible, vagrancy, with its attendant evils, prostitution, drunkenness, &c.

In attempting to report fairly concerning these evils, and to suggest proper methods for overcoming them, I have kept foremost in my mind several fixed ideas:

First. That intercourse on equal terms between whites and Indians invariably results in the degradation of the latter.

Second. That Indians in their present savage or semi-civilized condition are not competent to compete with the superior intelligence and force of the whites. In all cases where they attempt to do so, on equal

terms, the Indians become the victims of the vices of the whites and the easy prey of the unscrupulous trader and speculator.

Third. That, even if it be true that civilization will ultimately exterminate the Indian race when it comes in contact with the Anglo-Saxon merciless rule of progress and life, "root, hog, or die," yet it is the duty of the Government to protect all human beings within its power in their rights, and to determine those rights; and if any class of those beings are shown by nature to be incompetent to live under the high-pressure laws of advanced civilization, it is the duty of the Government to pass special laws under the operation of which an *opportunity* to grow into civilized life may be given them, at least to protect them humanely from the consequence of their own weakness.

Fourth. That it is peculiarly the duty of our Government to pass special laws for the protection of Indians, who are forced to receive civilization among them, even though special laws for other classes be objected to.

Fifth. That any attempt at the present time, except in special instances, to extend, unqualifiedly, rights or even privileges of citizenship to Indians, will necessarily result in evil to them, through the competition of forces for which they are not prepared.

Sixth. That Indians must be treated as wards of the Government, and in consequence thereof the Government must be the guardian or trustee of all their rights, or establish such trusteeship for them.

Seventh. That their rights as wards must be determined and *vested* in their trustee, beyond the reach of political control and the effects of political changes.

Eighth. That until it be shown that Indians are increasing in numbers, it is unnecessary to reserve or establish rights for their use in excess of the demands of their present numbers. Reservations of land, sufficient to provide for their actual occupation, will answer all politic purposes. Experience shows that larger reservations always invite encroachments with impunity by the whites.

Ninth. That the ordinary punishments for Indian misdemeanors and crimes, as applied under general laws now in force, are not effectual against their commission or repetition. Except within the limited operation of their own laws and customs, Indians only exceptionally appear to have any shame or regard for reputation, the two great conservators of good morals and public peace. Indians need a more rigid and effective system to compel or induce obedience to law.

Tenth. That when Indians and whites mingle in their occupations and life, the interests of the whites are equally involved with those of the Indians in any plan for the assistance or government of the former, and the interests of both should be considered together.

Eleventh. That prostitution of Indian women is the invariable result of unrestricted intercourse between Indians and whites, and the sole great cause of the extermination of Indian tribes by the advance of civilization, ardent spirits sometimes being the means to such debauchery used by whites, and generally being the object coveted, for which the women prostitute themselves, and are suffered to do so by the Indian men, who covet a share of the ill-gotten poisons.

Twelfth. That the sale of ardent spirits to Indians cannot practically and effectively be prevented by laws forbidding or punishing the sale thereof. In the streets of San Diego and other towns I have visited, it is common to see Indians coming and going with bottles of whisky, and yet no white jury will convict a white trader. Even if the sale could be stopped at the stores, there are a thousand ways to smuggle the contra-

band article among the Indians. The only remedy is to punish the Indian for drunkenness, not by confinement in jail, but by compulsory work.

Having entertained these fixed ideas on the subject of Indian character and management, after making a thorough investigation of the condition of the Mission Indians by a tour of observation throughout Southern California, I requested the city, county, State and Federal officers to meet me in the cities of San Diego and Los Angeles for consultation. These officers, or many of them, have had, for many years, constant necessity to study this Indian question in a practical way, and their large experience I found to be valuable to me. Especially important was it for me to present my views to the register and receiver of the land-office of that district, because these officers are constantly troubled with contests between white settlers and Indians, and the results of their observation I found to be of value.

In San Diego a meeting was called informally at the county court-room on the 20th of October last. The San Diego Union of the next day published a lengthy report of the proceedings, giving much of the substance of that which is stated in the first part of this report, besides the following, which I will quote in order to show what the feeling of the community there is, as based on that publication. The Union says:

Yesterday afternoon, by invitation of Special United States Commissioner Charles A. Wetmore, the county officers and citizens of San Diego met in the county court-room to hear his suggestions regarding the rights, duties, and obligations of the Mission Indians of this county, and the proposed plan for the improvement of their condition. Before making a report upon a matter of mutual interest to the Government and to the citizens of Southern California, it was deemed desirable to obtain the views of those familiar with the subject in its local bearings. It was gratifying to observe that not only were all the officers of the county present, but many of our most thoughtful and best citizens.

* * * * *

Mr. Wetmore's idea is to reproduce, as far as present circumstances will permit, the old mission system, and to revive the slumbering influences which once controlled these christianized Indians. He has outlined his plan as follows:

First. To adjust and determine the rights of the Indians on public lands. The Indians, in many places, are living in valleys on the public lands. There are no reservations for them; they have not been recognized as citizens with privileges to preempt lands, nor should such privileges be granted them. The era of indiscriminate grazing is gone, and the Indians in most places simply require a small patch of ground for a home. Indians here seldom cultivate more than a small garden, and generally the most that they require to occupy would be five acres. In a few cases larger possessions are cultivated, but then it will almost always be found that several families are cultivating the field in common. The majority of the Indians depend for support upon their labor as laborers in the country, and to obtain employment they periodically leave their villages, only to return to them again. Their love for their little homes is, however, very great, and they can only be induced to abandon them by force, long-continued persecution, or the demoralizing influence of whisky, for which many of them will sell anything that they possess, even the virtue of their families.

In nearly all the valleys containing Indian settlements, white settlers have established homes. The conflict is inevitable. There is no authority by which the Land-Office can recognize and exclude from pre-emption the Indian occupations; the settler, whose claim of one hundred and sixty acres or less includes necessarily an Indian habitation, cannot obtain his title without claiming the Indian occupation also. There is, therefore, a strong temptation to cut the gordian knot of difficulties by intimidating the Indian to leave, or purchasing his right for a bottle of whisky. In the one case the Indian becomes belligerent, and is disposed to defend his own claim in his own way; and, in the other case, he becomes a vagrant or a trespasser. Mr. Wetmore says that he finds very little disposition on the part of the settlers to treat the Indians badly; the troubles arise from the want of laws by which the Indian settlements and claims can be determined and set apart. In a few cases patents have issued to settlers for lands on which there are Indian homes; but generally the slow progress of public surveys has rendered it impossible for the settlers to prove up their claims.

Before the difficulties become greater, Mr. Wetmore thinks that a survey should be made of all the Indian villages and homes on the public lands, so as to determine

the exact location and extent of their actual occupancy. Then an order should be made by the Government reserving from pre-emption all such tracts, the extent to be determined, when there is a conflict with white settlers, by actual cultivation or continued inclosure in the past; or in case where there is an Indian house without cultivated lands or inclosures, the reservation of a square lot not to exceed five acres. When there is no conflict with white settlers, more liberal reservations might be made. Then the settlers might proceed with their pre-emption without disturbing the Indians. Legislation should be had to authorize the issuance of a patent for the lands of the Indians to some party—say the Secretary of the Interior—to be held *in trust* for the Indians. Certificates of right of possession should then be issued by the trustee to the Indians, the condition in all cases to be that any sale, lease, or transfer of the title, or occupancy by the Indians except by special permission of the trustee, be declared void. All inducement to corrupt the Indian for the sake of acquiring his title to land would then cease. The Indian would be satisfied and secure in his home, and could be compelled to improve it by making substantial inclosures, &c.

Mr. Wetmore also suggests that a law be passed authorizing Indians to contract for the purchase of lands, or receive gifts of the same on private ranches or farms, providing that the title be vested, as in the other case, in the hands of a trustee, with similar restrictions as to its transfer or sale. This would enable ranchmen to settle about them the Indians whom they employ. This idea has been suggested to a number of land-holders in this county, especially those engaged in raising stock, and in nearly every case Mr. Wetmore says that they express a desire to adopt it at once and will be glad to give Indians homes to secure their services.

Second. To settle the conflict between Indians on ranches and the ranch-holders. This may be done in some cases by the purchase of the lands actually occupied by the Indians, the title and allotments to be similarly arranged as in the case of the public lands, and for the rest by the purchase of some suitably-situated and selected tract on which can be organized a central and principal town and rendezvous for the tribe. If this should be done Mr. Wetmore thinks that a lot of ground should be set apart for a church; and inasmuch as these Indians are all Roman Catholics, the Roman Catholic church should be invited to establish there a mission, and be secured in a permanent occupation of the same. The influence of such an institution might in a great measure restore the former prosperity of Indians.

No compulsion should be used to compel the Indians to accept any particular abode, except in case of habitual vagrancy; but the plan should be to encourage the development of the Indian town and mission. The Government might well afford to educate, in Santa Clara College or elsewhere, a small class of young Indians, whose work might hereafter be used to advantage in the tribe.

Third. Vagrancy, &c. A resident agent should be appointed, at least in the beginning, to carry this plan into effect. He should have power to seize any Indian who is a vagrant, habitual drunkard, or prostitute, and hire out his or her services to labor, the proceeds at the end of a given term of such servitude to be expended upon the home of the Indian, or, as punishment for vagrancy, the Indian might be compelled to work a specified time in improving the lands of the Indian town. Indians should be treated as vagrants who remain longer than twenty-four hours within the limits of the city of San Diego or other town of any considerable size, unless they have employment.

At some future time the homes of the Indians might be given in fee to them. They would then be qualified for citizenship and the old mission idea would be fulfilled. This plan, at least, would secure the Indians permanent homes and put a stop to their fear of losing what they possess. It would be both politic and humane.

During Mr. Wetmore's remarks, questions were asked and suggestions offered by several of the gentlemen present; and, at the conclusion, there were expressions of hearty approval from County Judge Bush, C. P. Taggart, esq., Assemblyman Bowers, Maj. D. Chase, District Attorney Hotelkiss, Judge Tyson, County Clerk Grant, Sheriff Hunsaker, A. E. Horton, and others. Mr. Bowers commended the proposition to secure the influence of the Catholic Church, which had attained a success in its dealings with these Indians which remained as an example for the treatment of the present problem; we could hardly hope to succeed better than the early mission fathers did. Mr. Taggart said that Mr. Wetmore had really thought out a practical application of the ancient mission system to the wants of the present day; he had proposed a plan which comprehended the best features of that old system and was adapted to existing necessities.

There was, indeed, a unanimous indorsement of the general plan outlined by the commissioner, and a willingness was expressed to urge its adoption upon the Government by the people of this county.

The foregoing extracts contain a very good report of the remedies that I suggested for the correction of evils now existing, and also a fair statement of the action of the meeting, as will be shown by the copies of

Bancroft Library

official letters received by me from officers who are of both political parties, and mostly democrats, which copies I include in this report.

I am still of the opinion that the suggestions there made by me were those that should be made, and I now offer them to the Government, hoping that the attention of Congress will be called to them.

I feel only in doubt as to the practicability of carrying out the suggestions in reference to remedies for vagrancy. The question of citizenship of Indians and a conflict of laws, Federal and State, might hereafter modify these proposed remedies.

In several instances, Indians in Los Angeles County have been induced to make application, as citizens, to have their names, as voters, registered, which has been done for them; but I know that these Mission Indians, excepting a few who are half-breeds, are totally unfit to exercise the rights of citizenship. If, during any political excitement, any person (and there are those who could and might do it) should cause the names of a large number to be registered, and then control their votes, a great wrong might be perpetrated. It is my opinion that only by special commission should Indians be recognized as citizens, if at all, and some action should be taken to prevent a continuance of the present recognitions, and I believe that this would be mercy and true policy for the Indians. Even to acquire title to Government land, I do not think it would be necessary, so far as my observation has gone, to grant rights of citizenship. If Congress will pass a law to authorize such a relation of trusteeship as I have recommended, the Indians may acquire safely what lands they actually require; but the rights of citizenship might make them the easy tools of land speculators, many of whom have been known to this Department to acquire titles to public lands by using white men to enter lands fraudulently for them; and if this use can be made of white men, where would be the safety for Indians? It is also true that, except in rare cases, Indians do not require for actual use more than a small tract of land. When they are in unsettled districts they hunt, fish, and roam about, and will not settle in fixed habitations or ask for fixed areas of land for individual use until white settlements have crowded them to the wall. Then it is too late for them to pre-empt land; or, if not, they require only small homesteads, because their chief support is in working for the whites, not in managing their own estates. Fixed habitations, however, are necessary to them, but the title should be vested in a trustee until they become advanced in civilization. I will suggest some of the advantages which, it occurs to me, would be in favor of the trustee system.

First. It would not be within the power of unfriendly local State and county officers to tax the Indians out of their homes, which might be done.

It requires legal advice to preserve titles to lands, and the Indian would be at a disadvantage before his sharper brothers. Under the trustee system lands would be assessed, if assessed at all, to the trustee, who, through his agents, would collect, if required, a just and equitable tax from the Indians, without confusing them by a multiplicity of laws.

Second. It seems to be the rule that Indians die often without issue. The trusteeship could be so arranged as to keep their estates out of probate court, which would under any other plan cause much difficulty.

Third. If a tribe should die out, the lands granted them would be retained by the trustee, and could be sold so as to return to the Government some of, if not all, or more than the cost of settling the Indians.

Fourth. The condition of accepting and enjoying the benefits of the trusteeship might be made so as to prevent incompetent Indians from applying for rights as American citizens, and keep them under control without conflict between the agents of the trustee and State authority.

Perfect control and simplicity of government will be indispensable in making civilized beings out of Indian tribes.

I will also suggest here a few ideas in addition to the report extracted above concerning religious influence with the Indians.

It is an undeniable fact that to this day the Roman Catholic priests have a strong influence over the Mission Indians, which influence might be exerted for their benefit if the Government would do its duty by the Indians. In examining this branch of the subject, I found three important things to consider.

First. It is claimed by some that there is no longer in the Roman Catholic, or any other church, that energetic spirit of missionary work, that desire to make proselytes, that once was the foundation of missionary successes.

Second. That the Roman Catholic Church would not, "unless there were money in it," again assume charge of the Indian neophytes.

Third. The fact that the church is not now doing in that section any practical missionary-work, excepting occasional parochial visits of the resident priests, and an occasional attempt to gather the Indians at a feast, in order to keep alive respect, or rather fondness, for the church.

I visited Archbishop Alemany at San Francisco, and consulted with him on the subject. He came to conclusions with the rapidity of one who has studied the matter, and had experience in it. He said :

The church cannot do anything for the Indians while they are subject to changes of political policy. To-day they are roaming about; to-morrow they may be placed on a reservation and put in charge of a Methodist; next day the reservation is restored to the public domain, and the Indians are scattered; again they are placed under special agency of an Israelite, and then we may be asked to aid the poor Indians. We can do nothing with them unless we have a permanent control, and the Indians should have permanent homes, so that our work among them may not be lost. Let the Government buy a tract of land suitable for them, at least for those who have no homes.

And this is the whole story as far as it goes. In conversation with Father Ubach, at San Diego, and Father Verdaguer, at Los Angeles, both of whom are engaged partly in parochial work among the Indians, but without power to influence them greatly, it was said to me, after my suggestions had been published, that if the Government would adopt out this proposed policy, it would not be long before the Roman Catholic Church would have schools and colleges for the Indians, and would have Sisters of Charity among them. The men would be encouraged to work and the women to be virtuous. With such a policy they said they would undertake to subdue even the Apaches, and the military might be dispensed with.

I suggested to them that I should not recommend that the *control* of any given number of Indians, or the exclusive religious training, be given to any particular denomination of religious people; but that, having fixed the Indians in homes, with fixed rights, an equal opportunity be offered to all denominations to enter upon the missionary work where their own establishments and their work might become as permanent as they are now among any class of their peculiar co-worshipers. It would happen, of course, that the work in any particular locality would principally fall under the control of some one denomination, and in the case of the Mission Indians special invitations should be given to the

Roman Catholics to benefit the Indians who have already been taught religious habits by them. Perhaps also a school-fund for these people might well be intrusted to a Roman Catholic missionary, who might assume the office of teacher, and thus aid might be extended to the mission.

I was told that this plan would be acceptable, and that much good might be done if it were adopted.

In looking at this subject, I am led to the church-influence, not in a religious sense but with a regard for public policy, as the strongest and best that can be made available for the benefit of the Indians. I think that perhaps the church might do much to prevent the evils of prostitution. Yet I would limit my recommendation, as I have just said.

Bishop Amat, of the diocese in which Southern California is situated, was absent in Spain when I was at Los Angeles, and the acting bishop was absent in San Francisco, so that I failed to meet either of these persons. I was told by a priest in Los Angeles that Bishop Amat has given much time and thought to this Indian question, and has determined at some future time to inaugurate a mission system. He is truly devoted to the obligations of his office, and has the cause of the Mission Indians at his heart.

The views expressed by me at San Diego and Los Angeles were given freely to the public for criticism, in order that I might profit by any suggestion offered by the people living there, before making final report to the Department.

Those views, candidly expressed, have been received with unusual and unexpectedly great approbation, and in no single case have I seen an adverse criticism.

The San Diego Union of October 25, says :

The plan proposed by Mr. Wetmore for the management of these Indians, as outlined in our report of his conference with the county officers last week, is very warmly indorsed by all of our citizens, and its adoption is earnestly hoped for. It is believed to be the first practical scheme for the improvement of the condition of these Indians that has been presented, and no doubt is entertained of its success if put into operation.

After meeting the officials residing at Los Angeles, in the United States land-office, October 28, similar encouraging notices were published. I extract the following editorial from the Los Angeles Herald of October 29:

The views advanced by Mr. Wetmore, United States special commissioner to the Mission Indians, at a meeting of officials and other citizens, held yesterday at the United States land-office, are decidedly sound and practical, and his plan of action for the protection and advancement of these "wards of the nation," if approved at Washington and carried into effect, will prove of service both to Caucasian and to red men.

He very rightly opposes the doctrine advanced by some, that these Indians should be granted the full privilege of citizenship, maintaining that they must still be treated as wards, although they are now semi-civilized, as citizenship would only result in the debasement and final extermination of these poor fellows.

He is exactly right when he says that the red man would be wiped out if placed on equal footing with his intelligent and refined white brother. The granting of citizenship to the Indian would soon put an end to the vexations question, for the result would be that in a very short time all these "wards" would be translated to the happy hunting ground. This would be a very easy and not a costly solution of the difficulty, and in exact harmony with the bearing of Christians toward the American aborigines since the day when Columbus first trod our virgin soil.

As the Indians are still with us and evince but little inclination to retire from our genial fields, the only policy is to make them industrious, sober, and profitable to the community, and this can only be accomplished by treating them as humans, giving them homes and protecting those homes from the inordinate rapacity of unscrupulous whites.

Mr. Wetmore very practically suggests that small homes be given to the Indians and

held in trust for them by some responsible party; and also that a general Indian rendezvous be established, and the Catholics be invited to establish a mission thereon. Even the most enthusiastic Protestant will admit that the Roman Catholic Church has dealt most generously with the red men and accomplished much good for them, and it is reasonable to expect that just as much good can be accomplished by them at this latter day.

Let there be a new deal, and we confidently predict that the Indian vagabondage which has proved such a shame and a curse will soon cease.

The entire report, printed in the San Diego Union, was translated and published with favorable notices in La Cronica, a newspaper printed in the Spanish language at Los Angeles, a journal representing the interests of our Spanish-American citizens.

Col. B. S. Peel, writing from Los Angeles to the Alta California on this subject, says:

This lovely country was once owned entirely by the ancestors of the Mission Indians. It supplied all their wants, and they lived in peace and happiness; and without an act or fault of their own, all that they possessed on earth has been filched from them, and they are now perishing on their own land in the midst of strangers. If we had conquered these poor creatures in a bloody conflict, in a war instigated by some act of cruelty on their part, there would be some extenuation for our conduct, but we have no such excuse. They have ever been peaceful, kind, and even submissive. Even now, while they are being kicked from door to door by the white man, they are entirely submissive, with the picture of humility and despair in every feature. They are all broken up, and wander around in perfect helplessness. They have the sympathy of a great majority of the people, but individuals can do nothing toward settling them down in permanent, quiet homes, where they can be protected and educated. The Government alone can and must protect them; and should it fail to do it there must come a time when the judgment of Heaven will avenge their wrongs.

We have examined Mr. Wetmore's plan proposed to be acted on by the Government; we have given it a great deal of thought, and at present we have no amendments to offer. It is the best we have seen.

The National Republican, in commenting on this subject, says:

The suggestions made to the county officers and citizens of San Diego have a more than local interest and significance. They apply almost equally to the treatment of the Indians of other sections, and outline a policy marked by sound judgment and practical reasoning.

I quote these extracts with a view to inform the Department of the general public sentiment on the subject, and, in case this report should be referred to Congress, for the purpose of satisfying members that not only is the cause of humanity involved in this question, but also the interests of the Government and the general public.

For this same reason I will submit copies of official letters, which have been sent to me, as follows:

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE,
San Diego, Cal., November 23, 1874.

DEAR SIR: Inclosed please find indorsements of your Indian scheme by county officials. I think it highly important, both for the Indian and the white race, that some action be taken to regulate these people and settle their rights. Police them and make an earnest effort to have them self-sustaining. I have just convicted the Indian, Jesus Sordo, of murder in the first degree for killing Johnson at Bowlder Creek, near Julian, in 1870. He will be hung soon. I am now prosecuting an accomplice, José Acama by name. Let your plan be adopted. We are satisfied with it, and believe great good can be done to the remnants of these Mission Indians. There should by all means be a resident agent to carry out the scheme, with large power to manage refractory cases.

* * * * *

I sincerely hope that Congress and the Department will act promptly.

Truly yours,

C. A. WETMORE, Esq.

A. B. HOTCHKISS.

SAN DIEGO, CAL., October 23, 1874.

DEAR SIR: Having listened to your plan for the care and preservation of the interests of the Mission Indians of California, and having seen a statement of the same published in the San Diego Daily Union, we most heartily and cheerfully indorse the same.

Very respectfully yours,

A. B. HOTCHKISS,
District Attorney, San Diego County.
 THOMAS H. BUSH,
County Judge, San Diego County.
 JAMES MCCOY,
State Senator, San Diego County.
 A. S. GRANT,
County Clerk, San Diego County.
 N. HUNSAKER,
Sheriff, San Diego County.
 MARK P. SHAFFER,
City and County Assessor, San Diego County.
 J. H. JAMISON,
Superintendent Public Schools, San Diego County.
 ANDREW CASSIDAY,
Supervisor San Diego County.

CHAS. A. WETMORE, Esq.

The following letter is from the State assemblyman from San Diego County, now appointed collector of the port of San Diego:

SAN DIEGO, CAL., October 25, 1874.

SIR: After hearing you explain quite fully the plan and suggestions which you propose to report to the Government in regard to the Mission Indians of Southern California, I have to say that I heartily approve the same, and, so far as I can learn, they are approved by every person in the county who is at all conversant with the subject. I particularly commend your idea of inviting the aid of the Catholic Church, for the reason that these Indians are Catholics, and have faith in the Catholic Church; but they have no faith in the Government of the United States, and have abundant reason for want of faith in the latter. It matters not how admirable the plan may be, or how well calculated to do justice to both white and Indians, it will fail to a great extent unless the Indians can be persuaded that the Government will deal fairly and honestly by them, and secure to them rights *permanently*. However any one of us may be prejudiced against the Catholic Church or its religious teachings, all must confess that it has attained a degree of success in handling and governing Indians that has not been approached by our Government yet.

I sincerely hope that your report will be adopted by the Government as a basis for its action in the matter, and that action had speedily, thus avoiding the serious trouble that threatens this country.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

W. W. BOWERS.

C. A. WETMORE, Esq.

TEXAS AND PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY,
 ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, SAN DIEGO, CAL.,
 October 24, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR: Permit me to say that I have read with great satisfaction your article in the San Diego Union in regard to the future management of the Mission Indians of this county. If you can carry your ideas into practice, I verily believe that you will solve the much-vexed question, "What shall we do with the Indians?"

I sincerely hope that the Interior Department will take hold of your plan in earnest, and in good time adopt your views.

I am, very truly, yours,

C. P. TAGGART,

Member Republican State Central Committee for San Diego County, California.

Mr. CHARLES A. WEIMORE,
Commissioner to Mission Indians, &c., San Diego, Cal.

ROOMS OF THE REPUBLICAN COUNTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE,
San Diego, Cal., October 23, 1874.

DEAR SIR: We heartily indorse your views with regard to the treatment of the Indians of this county, and hope you will be able to carry out your ideas, believing that it will not only be to the advantage of the Indians, but also of the white settlers.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE STONE,
Chairman.

D. C. REED,

Secretary Republican County Central Committee.

Mr. C. A. WETMORE,
Special United States Indian Commissioner.

UNITED STATES LAND-OFFICE,
Los Angeles, Cal., November 9, 1874.

DEAR SIR: I have carefully considered your views in regard to a plan for providing homes, and otherwise providing for and defining the rights of the Mission Indians of Southern California, and heartily indorse the same as the most feasible plan yet suggested, to my knowledge, by which the Government may discharge obligations to these poor creatures, without incurring the extraordinary expense which would be required to gratify the rapacity of the ordinary agency. The economy of your plan will certainly commend itself to the favorable consideration of the Government.

It is apparent that you are familiar with the character and wants of these people, and that you have thoroughly studied the subject. The quantity of land which, in your opinion, should be allotted to them as sufficient for all their requirements, coincides with the views I expressed on that subject in a communication to the honorable Commissioner of the General Land-Office, bearing date April 20, 1874.

Very truly yours,

ALFRED JAMES,
Register United States Land-Office.

C. A. WETMORE, Esq.,
United States Special Commissioner for the Mission Indians.

Ex-Governor John G. Downey, under date of October 10, 1874, writes a personal letter from Los Angeles, in which he says:

I am glad you have been appointed commissioner to these poor, unfortunate, deserving, and neglected Indians. * * * The Government has stood by and sanctioned the robbing of the Mission Lands that were intended by the Spanish and Mexican governments for neophytes. They have lavished millions on less-deserving human beings than these docile creatures. Now, in the name of humanity, urge something in their behalf.

Having thus reviewed the whole subject, within the range of my mission, I hope that my labors will result in something practical; that the necessary orders may be issued to carry into effect the surveys required; and that Congress will be asked to pass laws authorizing the proposed pre-emption of small tracts actually occupied by Indians, by trustee in their behalf, to authorize such trustee to act as above recommended, and to appropriate sufficient funds to purchase lands for those that are homeless, and that such other action may be taken as may appear necessary to aid and regulate the now wretched remnants of a once wealthy and prosperous mission.

Your obedient servant,

CHAS. A. WETMORE,
*Special Commissioner to the Mission Indians
 of Southern California.*

Hon. E. P. SMITH,
*Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
 Interior Department, Washington, D. C.*

